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Former agent recalls CIA 'dirty tricks'

By Michael McCafferty

When asked what he would do with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) if given the chance, former CIA agent John Stockwell said, "I'd close it down."

Stockwell, who spent 13 years in the CIA before leaving the organization, spoke at the Bone Student Center Prairie Room Monday night to tell about some of the revelations he has made about the CIA.

Stockwell said he ascended to the upper echelon of the CIA in 1975 and was put in charge of a task force to support U.S. interests in Angola and was given a seat on a subcommittee of the National Security Council.

Stockwell said he served the CIA in Vietnam and did not expect to see another covert war after Vietnam. He added, "We did not leave with honor. We didn't accomplish our objective."

When the Angolan opportunity came after Vietnam, Stockwell said he wanted the job to find out how decisions are made, hoping that his career in the CIA would make sense.

Stockwell said the CIA was issuing reports saying that the Soviets were moving into Angola when, in fact, the Soviets didn't move in — but the CIA did.

According to Stockwell, the CIA

was supporting a faction of people in Angola, arming those people and recruiting mercenaries from other countries to further the CIA's interests, while the Cubans were advising an adversary faction.

Stockwell said the Senate was being reassured that the United States wasn't sending weapons into Angola. "We lied patently to the Senate about that," he added.

The president, the National Security Council, the Senate, the press and the American people were being lied to by the CIA, according to Stockwell.

Stockwell said the CIA had false stories placed in the press about Cubans raping women in Angola. He added that the Washington Post printed a false story initiated by the CIA about Soviet advisers being captured in Angola.

Stockwell compared what happened in Angola to what is now happening in Nicaragua. He said that what Reagan knows about the world is "what the CIA tells him."

Stockwell said nobody briefs the president as much as the CIA and that the CIA "does not hesitate to give the president its view of the world by lying."

The CIA is involved in "lots and lots of dirty tricks," according to Stockwell.